



California Department of Veterans Affairs

NEWS FOR VETERANS

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MESSAGE FROM SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS THOMAS JOHNSON IN REMEMBRANCE OF THE TRAGIC EVENTS OF SEPTEMBER 11, 2001

On December 18, 2001, Congress established September 11th as Patriot Day, a day on which foreign enemies killed more Americans than on December 7th, 1941.

September 11th brought a new war to our doorstep and into our lives, a war of terror and intimidation: A war that has elevated man's inhumanity to man to a new, unconscionable level.

It is not just soldiers in the field, airmen in the sky, or sailors and guardsmen on the seas that are the targets of this new enemy. It's workers in the office, children in school or innocent bystanders going about their daily lives. This new war is an attack on our way of life, on our freedoms, and on the liberty enjoyed by freedom loving people everywhere.

This is a different kind of war; not a war of defined lines or easily identified combatants as existed in most past wars. It is unlike the cold war that was waged strategically and often diplomatically, even though there were periodic military encounters. This war is one of terror where life is not valued and morality has no meaning.

Today we remember not only those who lost their lives on September 11th, 2001 and their families; we also remember those who are fighting the war on terror at home and abroad. The war on terror is a war that will not be won easily, but it will be won. Thomas Paine once said: "What we obtain too cheap, we esteem too lightly; it is dearness only that gives everything its value." Our liberty is dear and it will be maintained only at great price.

Today, let us remember those who are paying that price for us, sometimes the ultimate price. Let us assure those who are fighting the fight on terror that they have our support and let us uphold those families who have lost a loved one so that they know it was not in vain. Let us recommit ourselves to our mission of serving veterans with our best efforts and let us rededicate ourselves to the ideals of one Nation under God, united in the pursuit of liberty and justice for all.

Tom Johnson
Secretary of Veterans Affairs

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